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ASSOCIATION OF
AMERICAN RAILROADS
OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, May 29, 1981 -- Freight traffic on major U.S. railroads during the week ended May 23 totaled an estimated 16.7 billion ton-miles, 4.8 percent below the corresponding week a year ago, the Association of American Railroads reported today. The decline was primarily attributable to the impact of the United Mine Workers' strike.

Cumulative volume for the first 21 weeks of 1981 was an estimated 364.9 billion ton-miles, 2.0 percent lower than the comparable period of last year.

Carloadings in the week ended May 23 totaled 397,327 cars, 9.7 percent below 1980, but 2.2 percent higher than the preceding week of this year. Compared with last year, loadings were down 23.4 percent in the East, 4.5 percent in the South, and 2.8 percent in the West.

Compared with the corresponding week of 1980, 11 of the 21 commodity groups were up, led by loadings of motor vehicles and equipment, which increased by 5,388 cars, or 36.0 percent. Coal loadings were off 51,804 cars, or 44.5 percent. Fourteen of the 21 groups were up from the preceding week of this year.

Piggyback

The AAR also reported that piggyback freight traffic on major railroads during the week ended May 16 totaled 34,091 cars, up 9.2 percent from the corresponding week of 1980, and 60,249 trailers and/or containers, up 8.3 percent from last year.

The cumulative volume of TOFC/COFC traffic for the first 20 weeks of the year was 641,116 cars, 3.3 percent lower than last year, and 1,165,616 trailers and/or containers, down 3.2 percent. —

(more)

Following are carloadings of major railroads, by commodity groups, for the week ended 5/23/81:

	Loadings in Week ended May 23, 1981		Change from Corresponding Week 1980		Change from Preceding Week	
	Cars		Cars	Percent	Cars	Percent
Grain	20,886	D	3,218	13.4	D 195	0.9
Other farm products	4,937	I	123	2.6	I 119	2.5
Metallic ores	38,528	I	1,221	3.3	I 2,868	8.0
Coal	64,642	D	51,804	44.5	I 2,108	3.4
Crushed stone, gravel and sand	14,149	D	1,506	9.6	I 6	0.0
Nonmetallic minerals	13,759	D	202	1.4	D 673	4.7
Grain mill products	14,100	D	1,978	12.3	D 243	1.7
Food and kindred products	17,308	D	917	5.0	I 1,013	6.2
Primary forest products	19,216	I	844	4.6	D 791	3.9
Lumber and wood products except furniture	9,192	I	422	4.8	I 790	9.4
Pulp, paper and allied products	20,063	D	975	4.6	I 445	2.3
Chemicals and allied products	28,408	I	3,275	13.0	I 227	0.8
Petroleum products	5,419	D	120	2.2	I 55	1.0
Stone, clay and glass products	14,711	D	80	0.5	D 140	0.9
Coke	7,557	I	2,249	42.4	I 584	8.4
Metals and products	17,969	I	1,897	11.8	I 1,117	6.6
Motor vehicles and equipment	20,164	I	5,338	36.0	D 563	2.7
Waste and scrap materials	13,923	I	2,170	18.5	I 227	1.7
Forwarder and shipper association traffic	10,064	D	195	1.9	I 247	2.5
All other carloads	42,127	I	957	2.3	I 1,523	3.8
LCL traffic	205	I	13	6.8	D 30	12.8
Total Cars Loaded	397,327	D	42,486	9.7	I 8,694	2.2
Corresponding week of 1980	439,813					

	1981	1980	% Change
Total Cars Loaded (21 weeks)	8,715,525	9,291,503	D 6.2
Estimated revenue ton-miles (in billions):			
20 Weeks cumulative	348.2	354.8	D 1.9
Week ended May 23	16.7	17.5	D 4.8
21 Weeks cumulative	364.9	372.4	D 2.0

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